



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board

FROM: Sarah Graham, Senior Planner
Planning and Development Review Department

DATE: October 11, 2010

SUBJECT: Town Lake YMCA
SP-2010-0198C

ADDRESS: 1100 W. Cesar Chavez

APPLICANT REQUESTS:

From the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board:

Approval of Land Development Code (LDC), Section 25-2-721(A)(3)– Recommendation of a site plan waiver request in the Waterfront Overlay to be presented to the Land Use Commission.

From the Environmental Board:

Approval of LDC 25-2-721(A)(4) – Recommendation of the Environmental Board for a site plan waiver request within the Waterfront Overlay Combining District.

From the Planning Commission:

Approval of a waiver from LDC 25-2-736(E) - surface parking is prohibited, except for a parking area for buses, van pooling, the handicapped, or public access to park land.

Project Area Description

The YMCA site consists of a 4.8 acre site with an existing 57,703 sq ft building currently used as Indoor Sports and Recreation. This use is an allowed use per their zoning category – LI-CO-NP. The site’s associated conditional uses pertain to conditional and prohibited uses, none of which are being proposed. This project is located within the Lamar Subdistrict portion of the Waterfront Overlay Combining District.

The site plan shows an additional 8,118 sq ft added to the front of the building, which faces the baseball fields and Lady Bird Lake. The applicant is also proposing a plaza at the entry way as shown on the site plan. Through these improvements, the applicant is losing fourteen parking spaces at the front of the building and is showing an additional sixty-five spaces to the west of the building.

The applicant is requesting a variance from the 25-2-736(E) which prohibits surface parking in the Waterfront Overlay Lamar Sub District. The proposed construction shows an added façade and plaza area in the front of the building, which is currently used as parking. Fourteen parking spaces will be removed through this building renovation. The applicant proposes to add sixty-five (65) new spaces to the west of the building.

This is an administrative site plan; the Planning Commission must approve a variance request from LDC 25-2-736(E), and the commission requires a recommendation from the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board.

Waterfront Overlay

According to the Land Development Code, Section § 25-2-721(A)(1), approval of a site plan by the Land Use Commission is required if an applicant requests a waiver from the Waterfront Overlay requirements. According to LDC § 25-2-721(A)(3), the Land Use Commission shall request a recommendation from the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board before approving or denying a site plan within the Waterfront Overlay combining district and shall consider the recommendation provided by the board. The Waterfront Planning Advisory Board is to give a recommendation based on the criteria listed in § 25-2-713 - Variances, and § 25-2-715 - Review and Recommendation of the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board.

According to LDC § 25-2-713, the board may recommend approval of the variance after determining that the proposed project and variance are consistent with the goals and policies of the Town Lake Corridor Study, including environmental protection, aesthetic enhancement, and traffic; and the variance is the minimum required by the peculiarities of the tract. If the board recommends approval of a variance, the director shall forward the board's recommendation to the Land Use Commission, which shall consider the recommendation and the variance application at the next regularly scheduled meeting for which notice can be timely provided. The Land Use Commission shall grant or deny the variance, and an interested party may appeal the Land Use Commission's grant or denial of a variance to the council.

According to § 25-2-715, the board shall consider a request for review and recommendation at the earliest meeting for which notice can be timely provided and shall base its recommendation on the goals and policies of the Town Lake Corridor Study.

The addition to the existing YMCA building is in alignment with the goals and policies of the Town Lake Corridor Study. The goals include creating superior planning, design and mixing of land uses that are waterfront dependent - the YMCA's goals of promoting

physical health and their land use plan to connect their building to the parkland through the proposed plaza meets the intent of this goal. Another goal includes fostering a cooperative atmosphere in the corridor for the City, neighborhoods, and private landowners to work jointly to realize potential of the waterfront - the YMCA has been working closely with the Parks Department to improve the connection between adjacent parkland and the YMCA lot. Providing maximum visual and physical access to the waterfront is another goal - one which is demonstrated with the proposed plaza to encourage access. The applicant is also adding a shaded walkway connecting the building to Lamar Boulevard. Another goal of the Waterfront Overlay is to create a rich varied cultural environment in the corridor, geared to all age groups, cultural/educational expressions and interests - which is demonstrated by the YMCA as a well-respected non-profit group. The final goal that is clearly met by the YMCA project is to recognize full potential of the Town Lake creeks as open space connectors, form-shapers of urban development, and focal points for lively pedestrian-oriented mixed use. The YMCA's location between multi-family residential, the Amtrak Station, and parkland, as well as their plans to improve the site's connectivity meets the intent of this goal.

Environmental

This project is located in the Town Lake watershed, which is an urban watershed. Sixty-two trees were surveyed, of which 10 are proposed to be removed. No heritage trees are proposed to be removed with the project.

Drainage and Water Quality

The project utilized Fee in Lieu of providing on-site water quality control. This is in compliance with current water quality requirement for the urban watershed. No variances were required for water quality or drainage for this project. The project is discharging directly into Lady Bird Lake with direct conveyance, therefore requires no on-site detention pond.

Variance Request

The applicant has requested a waiver from § 25-2-736(E) - surface parking is prohibited, except for a parking area for buses, van pooling, the handicapped, or public access to park land. This is a requirement within the Lamar Subdistrict.

<u>Impervious Cover</u>	<u>Existing Conditions</u>	<u>Proposed Conditions</u>
Acres	2.58 ac	2.94ac
Percentage	54%	61%

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of this site plan without conditions.

If you need further details, please feel free to contact me at 974-2826.

Sarah Graham, Senior Planner
Planning and Development Review Department